

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 IO-12

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R 111037 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1546

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 8353

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MARR VS

SUBJECT: ICCS AIR SERVICES

1. BEGINSUMMARY: AS GVN HAS NOT BEEN FORTHCOMING TO DATE IN ASSISTING ICCS WITH FACILITIES NEEDED IN CONNECTION AIR SERVICES CONTRACT, AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER MAY 8 AND RAISED ISSUES WITH HIM. KHIEM SEEMED FAVORABLY DISPOSED. DURING MAY 10 CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER, HOWEVER, ICCS CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY GENERAL RAN INTO FAMILIAR ARGUMENT THAT AIR VIET- NAM COULD HANDLE ICCS AIR SUPPORT. END SUMMARY

2. GVN HAS NOT BEEN FORTHCOMING IN MATTER OF ICCS AIR SERVICES CONTRACT. THERE ARE THREE PRIMARY AREAS WHERE GVN SUPPORT IS NEEDED. IN THE FIRST, GROUND SUPPORT FACILITIES, THE ICCS WOULD LIKE WHERE POSSIBLE TO HAVE ITS CONTRACTOR, AIR AMERICA, SHARE FACILITIES WITH THE GVN AT THE SEVEN ICCS REGIONAL LOCATIONS, IN ORDER TO PROVIDE FASTER RESPONSE TO INVESTIGATORY REQUESTS, AND TO SAVE POSITIONING AND DEPOSITIONING COSTS. IN A BELATED RESPONSE TO AMBASSADOR GAUVIN'S FEBRUARY 28 LETTER REQUESTING THIS COOPERATION, THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE REPLIED ON APRIL 7, CITING ARTICLE 7 OF THE 1944 CHICAGO CONVENTION, TO THE EFFECT THAT " IT IS ADVISABLE FOR THE ICCS TO OFFER TO OUR NATIONAL AIRLINE THE OPPORTUNITY TO FULFILL ITS LEGITIMATE DUTY". FURTHER MATTERS AT ISSUE INCLUDE VISAS FOR 65 AIR AMERICA TCN CREW AND MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL, AND IN ORDER TO REDUCE COSTS TO THE ICCS AND

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EVENTUALLY TO THE PARIS AGREEMENT SIGNATORIES, THE PROVISION OF INVITED CONTRACTOR STATUS FOR FOREIGN FIRMS WHICH ARE PERFORMING SERVICES FOR THE ICCS.

3. ICCS HAS REPEATEDLY ATTEMPTED TO MEET WITH APPROPRIATE GVN OFFICIALS IN ORDER TO OBTAIN ASSISTANCE AND TO GET ACROSS THE POINT THAT IT IS SIMPLY NOT IN THE CARDS THAT AIR VIET- NAM WILL BECOME RESPONSIBLE FOR ICCS AIR SERVICES. (AIR VIET- NAM WAS A BIDDER BEFORE THE CONTRACT WAS AWARDED TO AIR AMERICA. WE ARE TOLD THAT IT S BID WAS HIGHER THAN AIR AMERICA' S, AND INFER THAT IN ANY EVENT, THE ICCS WOULD NOT PERMIT ONE OF THE TWO SOUTH VIETNAMESE PARTIES TO BE CHARGED WITH ICCS TRANSPORTATION.)

4. ON MAY 8, AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER AND RAISED THE MATTER WITH HIM. AMBASSADOR SAID THAT IT WAS TOTALLY UNREALISTIC TO THINK THAT THE ICCS WOULD USE AIR VIET- NAM, AND THAT REFUSING INVITED CONTRACTOR STATUS WOULD MERELY RAISE BILLS WHICH WOULD BE PASSED ON TO THE PARIS SIGNATORIES. HE POINTED OUT THAT CONSONANT WITH ITS RESPONSIBILITIES UNDERTAKEN IN THE PARIS AGREEMENT, THAT IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE GVN TO GRANT USE OF GROUND FACILITIES AT THE SEVEN REGIONAL ICCS SITES. AMBASSADOR ASKED IN THIS REGARD THAT A HIGH- RANKING OFFICER BE ASSIGNED TO ACCOMPANY ICCS AND AIR AMERICA REPRESENTATIVES TO SURVEY THE GROUND FACILITIES IN QUESTION. KHIEM SEEMED FAVORABLY DISPOSED TO THIS PRESENTATION.

5. ICCS CHAIRMAN WASILEWSKI AND SECRETARY GENERAL EFFENDI NUR, IN CALL ON WHITEHOUSE MAY 10 ON ICCS BUDGETARY MATTERS (SEPTTEL), SAID THAT THEY HAD RAISED ICCS AIR SERVICES QUESTIONS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER LAM THAT MORNING. TO THEIR DISAPPOINTMENT, LAM HAD MERELY REPEATED FAMILIAR THEME THAT AIR VIET- NAM SHOULD BE EMPLOYED. THERE THE MATTER STANDS AT PRESENT.

WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT KHIEM' S MORE FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE WILL CRYSTALIZE IN A DECISION FAVORABLE TO AIR AMERIA AND WE ARE URGING THE ICCS TO PRESS THE MATTER DIRECTLY WITH HIM. WHITEHOUSE

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